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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 21/14/95
Distr: UA/SC

UA 33/95 **Intimidation / Fear for safety** **13 February 1995**

EAST TIMOR **29 abducted by "Ninja" gangs in Dili**

Amnesty International is deeply concerned by reports that gangs of hooded individuals, apparently acting with the connivance of the Indonesian military, have begun operating in Dili, East Timor. The gangs are reported to have attacked houses, intimidated residents and to have abducted 29 people.

The reports indicate that the gangs, which are being referred to as "Ninja" gangs, began operating about 7 February and that since then they have been roaming the streets at night, stoning and burning houses and attacking residents of Dili. Their primary objective appears to be to target pro-independence activists and to create an intensified atmosphere of fear for those opposed to Indonesian rule.

Independent sources claim that the gangs have been hired by the Indonesian security forces to intimidate pro-independence activism and to quell recent unrest and opposition to Indonesia's occupation of East Timor. The army have denied that the groups are linked to the military and are alleging that the groups are East Timorese opposed to Indonesia's occupation. A military spokesperson has said that the military do not intend to take any action against the gangs at this stage. Witnesses have reported that the military have been observing the attacks, but taking no action. East Timor's police chief, Andreas Sugianto, has said, however, that at least one suspected gang member was arrested on 9 February.

Amnesty International is calling on the Indonesian authorities to take all possible measures to ensure that the so-called "Ninja" gangs are brought under control, and that any individual being held by the gangs is not subjected to torture or ill-treatment and is released immediately.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since November 1994, the level of unrest in East Timor has increased dramatically. Indonesian security forces have responded to the unrest with arbitrary and short-term detention, detention of prisoners of conscience, torture and suspected extrajudicial executions. In one incident in January, the armed forces announced that they had killed six guerrillas in a military confrontation in East Timor. A witness to the killing says the six were civilians, not guerrillas. While the military in East Timor are continuing to deny that the six were civilians, the Indonesian Government has acknowledged that soldiers involved in the incident might face a court martial.

The recent unrest and the crackdown by the authorities coincides with the release of a United Nations (UN) report, which concludes that members of the Indonesian security forces were responsible for killings during the November 1991 Santa Cruz massacre in Dili, East Timor. The report, by the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, also criticises the Indonesian Government for failing to satisfactorily investigate the fate of those killed and "disappeared" as a result of the massacre. The Indonesian Government has stated that it does not accept the report's conclusions and recommendations.

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RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Bahasa Indonesia or in your own language:
- urging the authorities to take all possible measures to ensure the safety of those individuals allegedly abducted by the so-called "Ninja" gangs, currently reported to be operating in Dili;
- calling on the authorities to bring to justice any gang member alleged to have committed human rights violations, and urging all possible measures to ensure that the gangs do not continue to commit violations;
- seeking clarification of why the authorities are apparently taking no action to prevent the activities of the gangs.

APPEALS TO

MILITARY COMMANDER REGION IX/UDAYANA
(covers East Timor, amongst other areas)
Brig. Gen. R. Adang Ruchiatna
Pangdam IX/Udayana
Markas Besar KODAM IX/Udayana
Denpasar
Bali, Indonesia
Telegrams: Pangdam IX/Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Brigadier-General

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Ali Alatas S.H.
Menteri Luar Negeri
Jl. Medan Taman Pejambon No.6
Jakarta, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 345 0517
Telexes: 44205; 44469 deplu jkt
Salutation: Dear Minister Alatas

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Lt. Gen. (ret.) Ali Said
Ketua, Komisi Nasional Hak Azasi Manusia (KOMNAS HAM)
Departemen Kehakiman RI
Directorat Jenderal Pemasyarakatan
Jl. Veteran No. 11
Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 525 3095 (c/o Ministry of Justice)

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 27 March 1995.